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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Integrated Management Information System project

Second report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the sixth progress report of the Secretary-General on the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) project (A/C.5/48/12/Add.1) and the follow-up report on IMIS (A/C.5/49/41). During the course of its consideration of the reports, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information to the Committee.

2. In paragraphs 1 to 6 of the introduction to his report contained in document A/C.5/49/41, the Secretary-General provides information on developments that led to the submission of his reports on IMIS. As stated therein, in his sixth progress report (A/C.5/48/12/Add.1), the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a detailed plan for completing and implementing IMIS world wide by the end of 1997, while in his follow-up report (A/C.5/49/41), the Secretary-General is requesting an additional appropriation of $7,337,200 to meet the net additional resource requirements of the project in 1994-1995.

3. As indicated in paragraph 4 of the follow-up report, the Board of Auditors, at the request of the General Assembly, has conducted a special audit of the IMIS project and its conclusions and recommendations are contained in document A/49/680. The Committee notes that some measures have already been taken in response to findings and recommendations of the Board (see A/C.5/49/41, para. 8). In view of its consideration of the question of additional resource requirements for IMIS for 1994-1995, the Committee was particularly interested to note that the Board of Auditors "found that the general rationale for the revised estimates was soundly based".

4. Part III, paragraphs 9 to 16, of the follow-up report provides information on the implementation of release 2 (Personnel), release 3 (Finance, procurement

and travel) and release 4 (Payroll) at Headquarters and in offices away from it. The Committee was informed that since June 1994 the following has been accomplished:

(a) Records of all Headquarters payroll staff have been entered in IMIS;

(b) Records of all dependants of staff members have been collected, eligibility for dependants' entitlements for the past three years reviewed, data entered into IMIS and payroll adjustments completed;

(c) The number of staff members with expired appointments has reduced from 1,515 at the end of July 1994 to 247 at the end of November 1994;

(d) The records of posts have been updated in IMIS with a reduction in the number of expired posts from 870 at the end of May 1994 to 20 at the end of November 1994;

(e) Discrepancies in staffing table control have been reduced from 2,509 at the end of July 1994 to 366 at the end of November 1994;

(f) Policy issues concerning procedures for the management of staff assigned or recruited for field missions have been streamlined and clarified;

(g) Increased delegation of authority has been granted to executive offices in the field of personnel administration and made possible by the monitoring tools provided by IMIS;

(h) Expiration of appointments, posts and post incumbencies is now monitored on a daily basis;

(i) New programmes have been written to process simultaneously high numbers of contract and post incumbency extensions.

5. The Committee raised a number of questions with regard to the progress of work as described above and especially the elements mentioned in subparagraphs (c) to (g) above. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that the cases of expired appointments, expired posts and discrepancies in staffing table control relate mainly to the high rotation of staff members released to peace-keeping operations and to a large number of posts in peace-keeping operations that have to be frequently extended following the renewal for sometimes short periods of mandates of peace-keeping operations. The Committee was informed that the number of such cases will be further reduced by the end of 1994.

6. The Committee inquired about the automation systems developed in the Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and their coordination and integration with IMIS. The Committee was informed that, in view of the increased volume of operations and owing to the non-availability of IMIS in 1992, the Field Administration and Logistics Division had started deploying three automation systems to its missions: a procurement system, an accounting system and a payroll system. The Committee was also informed that coordination between the Field Administration and

Logistics Division and the IMIS staff has now been established to ensure full compatibility of data and systems and that all financial, procurement and personnel reporting, with the exception, for the time being, of locally recruited staff, will be consolidated and integrated through IMIS as soon as possible. Detailed information provided to the Committee in this respect is contained in annex I to the present report.

7. The Committee was also provided with a chart demonstrating the number of actual transactions recorded through IMIS during the period from September 1993 to November 1994. The chart is reproduced in annex II.

8. As indicated in paragraph 20 of his latest report (A/C.5/49/41), the Secretary-General is requesting an additional appropriation of $7,337,200, of which an amount of $2,872,800 relates to maintenance, to cover the full amount of the net increase in the cost of the project in 1994-1995. Total requirements for 1996-1997 are estimated at $12.8 million, including $3.9 million for maintenance (see A/C.5/48/12/Add.1). With regard to the period after 1997, the Committee was informed that a project is currently under way to establish parameters for estimating future requirements for maintenance. The Committee trusts, in this connection, that the results of this project will be included in the next report of the Secretary-General on IMIS.

9. The Committee notes from the executive summary of the sixth progress report that "if the provision of the resources committed for the current biennium is delayed until the next biennium, that decision will prejudice the installation of the system in offices away from Headquarters, with a consequent additional adverse budget impact, giving rise to additional requirements of $3 million". The Committee was informed, on request, that the strategy in the event of delayed implementation of IMIS would have to be as follows:

(a) To concentrate on the completion and implementation of release 3 (Finance, procurement and travel) at Headquarters;

(b) To delay the start of the development of release 4 (Payroll) until early 1996. This will entail a considerable increase in contractual costs for development since it will not be possible to maintain the current rates and the contractors familiar with application will no longer be available. This will imply a postponement of the completion of the project until mid-1998 with related additional staffing costs;

(c) To delay implementation of releases 1 (Personnel management) and 2 (Staff entitlements and recruitment) at offices away from Headquarters. This will imply additional costs as a result of the need to keep on board the human resources implementation team for a longer period;

(d) To delay implementation of IMIS for peace-keeping activities in the field.

10. The Advisory Committee notes from the executive summary of the sixth progress report that, although IMIS was not intended as a cost-reduction project, there will be savings, and that the benefits that will accrue from the system are difficult to quantify in monetary terms owing to the fact that in the

majority of cases they cannot be measured by individual functions or by specific organizational unit. During the course of its deliberations, however, the Committee was informed that savings in terms of reduced personnel costs directly resulting from IMIS can be expected in the area of accounts, payroll and, possibly, in executive offices. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary-General look into this matter with a view to identifying the areas and scope of possible savings for the Organization resulting from the benefits brought about by IMIS and include information on this matter in his proposed programme budget for 1996-1997 and in his next submission on IMIS.

11. The Committee was informed, upon inquiry, that, out of the additional requirements of $7.3 million for the biennium 1994-1995, $1 million will not be expended until January 1996. The Committee at this stage therefore recommends approval of additional resources of $6,337,200 for IMIS for the biennium 1994-1995, subject to the procedure for the use and operation of the contingency fund. In addition, there will be need to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the $1 million to be expended in 1996.

12. As indicated above, the request for additional appropriations arising in connection with the implementation of the IMIS project in 1994-1995 falls under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 on the operation of the contingency fund. A consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates, currently under preparation by the Secretariat, will identify savings resulting from redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or from modification of projected activities. The Committee trusts that this would minimize an increase in contributions of Member States resulting from approval of additional resources for IMIS in 1994-1995.

Annex I

INTEGRATION BETWEEN THE IMIS AND THE FIELD ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS DIVISION SYSTEMS

1. In view of the increased volume of operations, in 1992 the Field Administration and Logistics Division was faced with the urgent need to automate its administration in the field. Owing to the non-availability of IMIS, and in consultation with the IMIS team, the Purchase and Transportation Service and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts/Accounts, the Field Administration and Logistics Division started deploying three systems to its missions: a procurement system, an accounting system and a payroll system.

2. The procurement package, Reality, was an upgrade of a system that was being used by the Purchase and Transportation Service. The new system was therefore purchased for both the Purchase and Transportation Service at Headquarters and the Field Administration and Logistics Division. The development of a new version of this package on the same technical platform as IMIS (UNIX/Sybase) led to the decision to integrate this package into IMIS. The contract that is being signed covers also the use of the newly developed version by the Field Administration and Logistics Division. A joint working group on procurement has been established between IMIS, the Field Administration and Logistics Division and the Purchase and Transportation Service to ensure consistent use of the software world wide and to establish a common catalog system for procurement of goods and services, which will also be the basis for the property management and for warehousing both at Headquarters and in the field. Within IMIS, the Reality system is being fully integrated with the accounting system to ensure funds sufficiency checking from the time of the issuance of requisitions. Requisitions raised in the field by the Field Administration and Logistics Division for procurement activities to be performed at Headquarters using this software will be loaded into IMIS Headquarters for funds sufficiency checking before continuation of the processing.

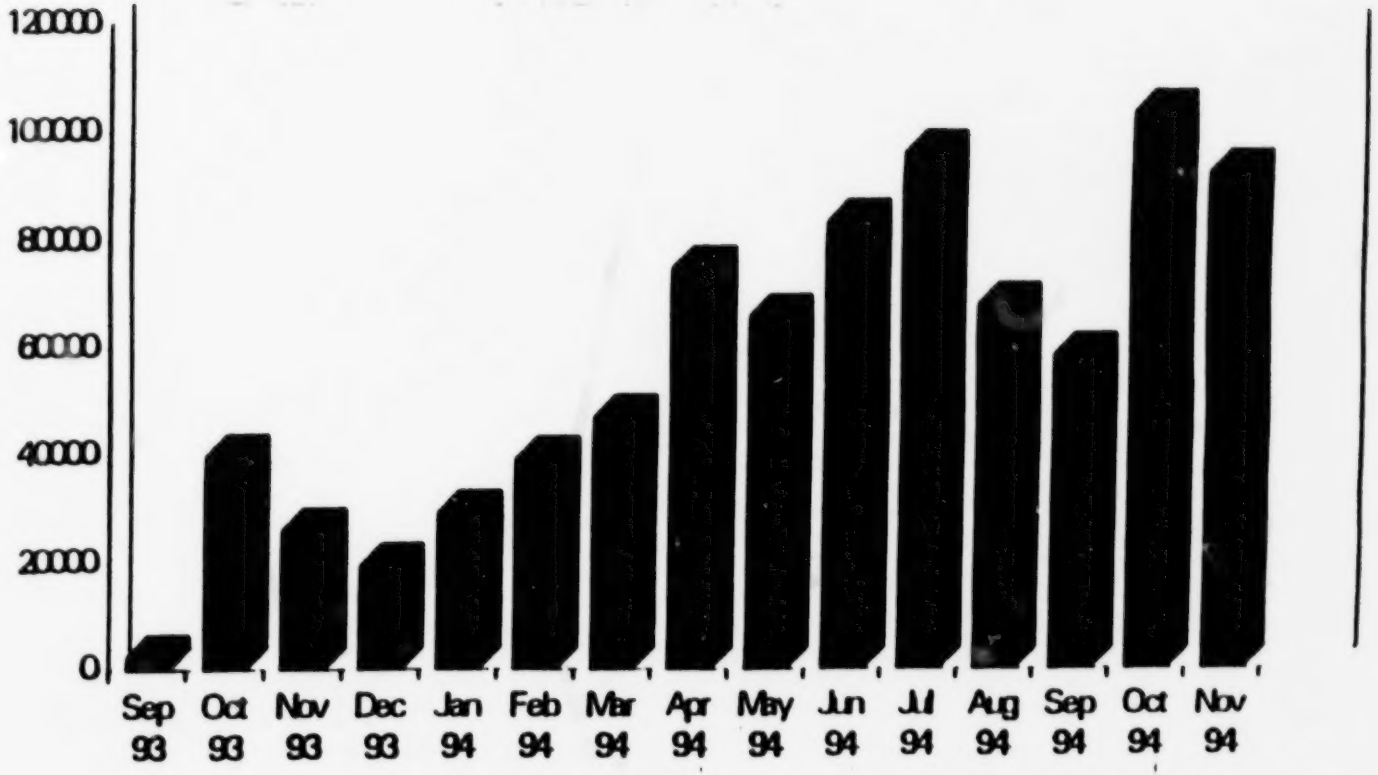
3. The accounting system was implemented in the field by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts/Accounts. Some members of the same team are now working on the IMIS release 3 user reviews and on the integration of the field system with IMIS. As of the implementation of release 3, the field system will be virtually compatible with IMIS. After the deployment of IMIS to the offices away from Headquarters, it is the intention of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, in coordination with the Field Administration and Logistics Division, to move progressively to the implementation of IMIS accounting modules in the main field missions, while the field accounting system will necessarily continue to be used for smaller missions. A similar strategy is envisaged for the payroll system.

4. No personnel systems were originally deployed to peace-keeping missions. Several systems were developed locally. Recently, the Field Administration and Logistics Division decided to select one system to be used at all missions. It has been agreed with the IMIS team that, starting early in 1995 and before it is deployed at other missions, this system, currently used in the United Nations Protection Force, will be made fully compatible with IMIS data definitions to

facilitate data transfers between the two systems. IMIS, in fact, contains only the records of internationally recruited staff payrolled by Headquarters, while the field personnel systems cover also the locally recruited staff, contractors and United Nations Volunteers. These systems have to meet very specific requirements, such as personal property inventories and evacuation-related data, not currently covered by IMIS. At the same time, work is under way between Field Administration and Logistics Division personnel and IMIS to determine how to integrate better with IMIS some specific Field Administration and Logistics Division needs in terms of personnel management at Headquarters.

5. In summary, coordination between the Field Administration and Logistics Division and IMIS has now been established to ensure full compatibility of data and systems. All financial, procurement and personnel reporting, with the exception for the time being of locally recruited staff, will be consolidated and done through IMIS. The deployment of IMIS at field locations will be considered progressively within the framework of the completion of the implementation of IMIS at offices away from Headquarters.

IMIS Usage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